

Humanitarian Assistance: Introduction to Key Topics

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Key Topics

- Definitions
- Malnutrition and mortality
- Sanitation and public health
- Different Rules
 - Joint operations, NGOs
 - Limited resources, many patients
 - Different environments & cultures

Humanitarian Emergency

- Acute Event
- Large Population
- Disruption or Displacement
- Basic needs can't be met by the population or its government

Types of emergencies

- Natural disasters
 - More concentrated populations increase magnitude of risk
- Technological disasters
 - Risk of NBC use increasing
- Complex Emergency
 - Conflict or civil strife
 - Displaced persons/refugees

Natural disasters

Hurricanes



Earthquakes



Technological Disasters

Chernobyl



OK City Bombing



Complex Emergencies



Kosovo

Refugee:

- flees own country due to war, or persecution
- Protection by UN, international law

Internally displaced people:

- Leaves home but stays within country
- Has less protection under law
- Harder to assist

Effects of Disasters

Unique to each, but consider:

- Loss of shelter
 - Earthquakes, hurricanes
- Inadequate food or water
 - Floods, displacement
- Impaired waste disposal/ sanitation
 - displacement, natural disasters

Additional Effects

- Physical and psych trauma
 - Sudden catastrophic events
 - Terrorization of civilian population by military or paramilitary forces
- Overwhelmed healthcare system
 - Often inadequate at baseline

Crude mortality rates

- Provide measure of disaster severity
- Deaths/10,000 people/day
 - Baseline CMR in developing world is 0.4-0.7
 - Rose to 34 (40-60X baseline) for Rwandan refugees in Zaire, 1994
- Can use to judge relief success

Phases in Emergencies

Acute: 1st mo.—chaos, high CMR

- Rapid response teams focus on basic needs

Recovery: mos. 1-6—improvement

- Expanded relief efforts based on epidemiologic assessments

Rehab/development: >6mos—return to baseline, helping self

Semantics

Operation
other than
war

Humanitarian
Assistance
Mission

Strategic
and
Sustainment
Operation

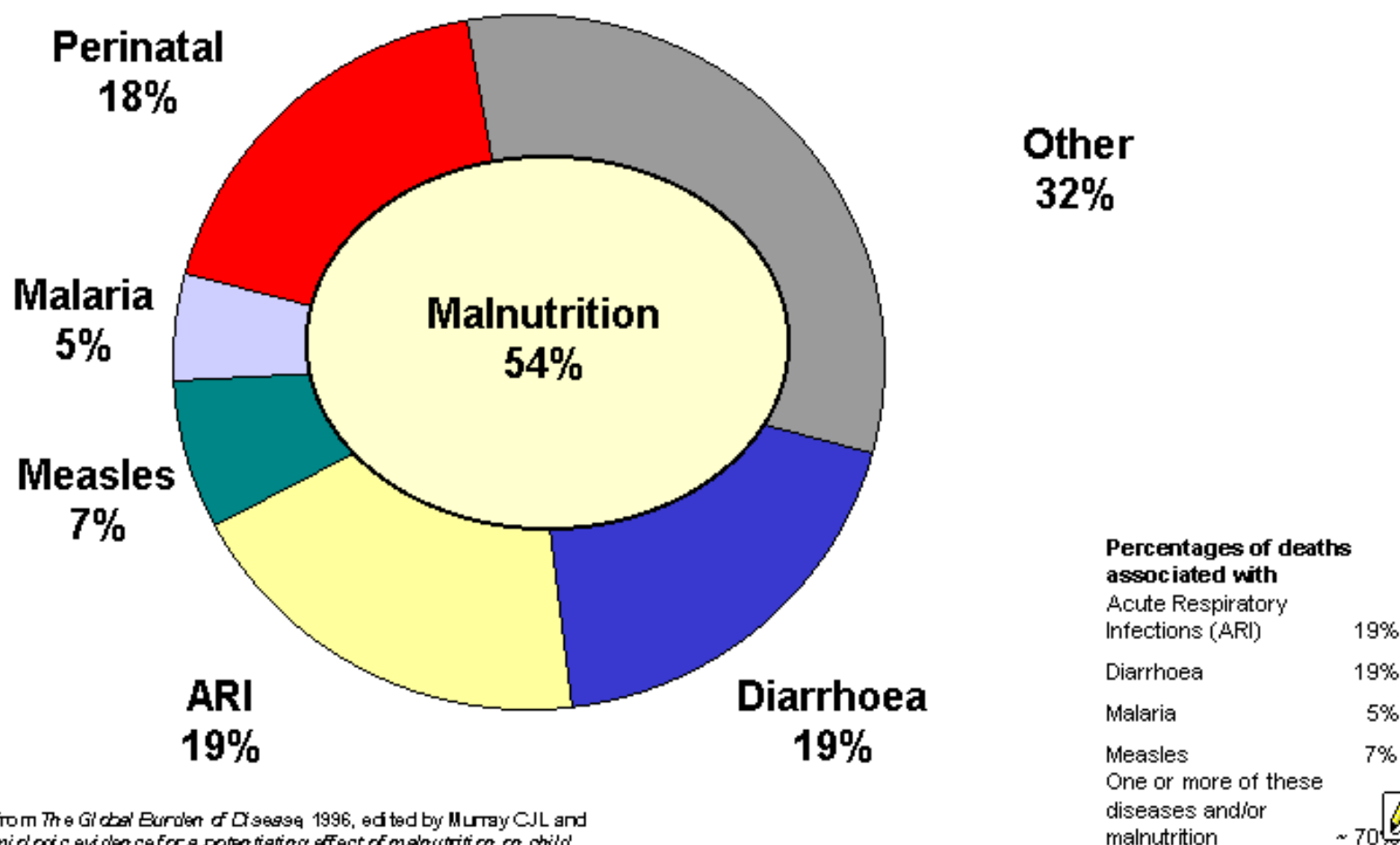
Causes of Mortality

(children and elderly most vulnerable)

Death in the Developing World:

- Diarrhea & Dehydration
- Measles
- Malaria
- Acute Respiratory Infections
- Malnutrition

Distribution of 11.6 million deaths among children less than 5 years old in all developing countries, 1995



Based on data taken from *The Global Burden of Disease*, 1996, edited by Murray CJL and Lopez AD and *Epidemiologic evidence for a potentiating effect of malnutrition on child*

Malnutrition

- Clinical malnutrition usually results from a combination of:
 - Energy and protein deficiency
 - Micronutrient deficiency

Marasmus

- emaciation due to energy & protein deprivation
- Usu <age 1
- Marked wt ↓
- Stunted
- Apathy
- Hunger



Kwashiorkor

inadequate protein intake +/-
catabolism 2nd to infection

- Edema—may conceal malnutrition
- Skin & hair changes
- Hepatomeg.
- Anorexia



Assessing nutritional status, ages 6 mos-5yrs

- Mid upper arm circumference (MUAC)




midpoint of child's upper left arm

If <13.5 cm, send for ht/wt or provide supplemental feeding

If <12 cm, severe malnutrition—need more intensive intervention

Vitamin A deficiency

- Lack of fresh fruit, dietary fat
- Rx: mango, papaya, squash, carrots, sweet potatoes, corn
- xerophthalmia >> night blindness, corneal xerosis & ulceration, resistance to infection 
- Rx: 100K U po <1yo; 200K >1yo

Beri-beri: B1 deficiency

- fatigue, anorexia, abd pain,
 - Dry: peripheral neuritis
 - Wet: edema, CHF
- Occurs w/ diet of polished rice
- Rx: parboiled rice, whole grains, legumes, meat, fish, milk, eggs
- Thiamine 50mgX1, then 10 mg/d

Niacin (B3) deficiency

- Pellagra—4 D's:
 - Diarrhea, Dermatitis(dark spots in sun-exp areas), Dementia, Death
- Risk: maize/low protein diet
- Rx: nuts, beans, whole grains, milk, meat, fish, eggs
- Niacin 50-100 mg/d until rash resolves

Vitamin C deficiency

Scurvy

- Swollen, bleeding gums
- Loss of teeth
- Swollen painful joints
- Internal hemorrhage
- Need to replace fresh fruit/vegs

Public Health Priorities

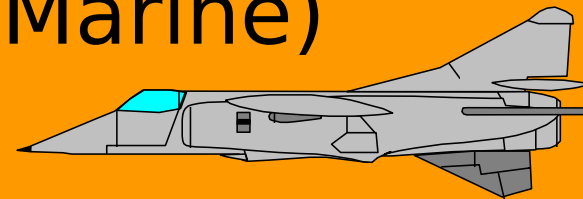
- Safe drinking water
- Human waste disposal
- Food service sanitation
- Vector control measures
- Malaria prophylaxis
- Adequate shelter
- Measles vaccination



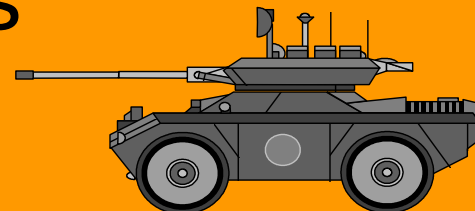
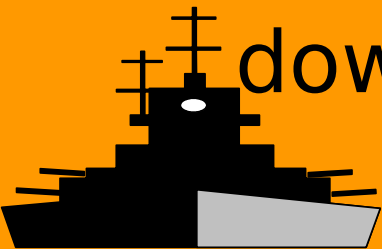


Joint Operations

- Integrated activity of 2 or more services (Army/Navy/AF/Marine)



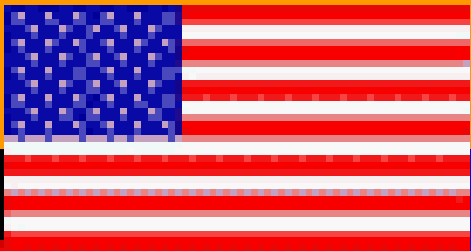
- Heightened importance 2nd to downsizing, tech advances



- Technology also a facilitator

Combined Operations

- US Forces operating with one or more allies
 - In addition to previous factors, favored w/change from Cold War to “peacekeeping” missions



Governmental Organizations

- UN & its agencies
 - Agencies have independent funding
 - Focus often on management
 - Delegate field work to NGOs and other agencies



UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance



- Provides Emergency Relief Coordinators to chair Inter-Agency Standing Committees w/ rep from all agencies & NGOs
- Makes sure humanitarian issues don't fall through cracks
- Field ops in multiple regions & nations

UN High Commissioner for Refugees



- Coordinates relief in most refugee crises
- Advocate for needs of refugees and displaced persons



UN Children's Fund

- A fund, not an agency
- provides food, safe water, medicine and shelter for displaced children
- strives to establish children's rights
- works in 161 countries, areas and territories



UN Development Program



United Nations Development Programme
Partnerships to Fight Poverty

- Focuses on disaster prevention and preparedness
- Established programs for disaster management in 11 countries in 1998 alone
- coordinates disaster relief work at the local level

- Mission: attainment by all people of highest level of health
- Coordination of international health work
- Provides technical assistance & consultation to nations
- Promotes medical research & training



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
of THE UNITED NATIONS

Food
for
all

- Largest autonomous UN agency
- End poverty and hunger through agricultural development
- Improve nutrition & food security
- Provides direct assistance plus policy and planning advice

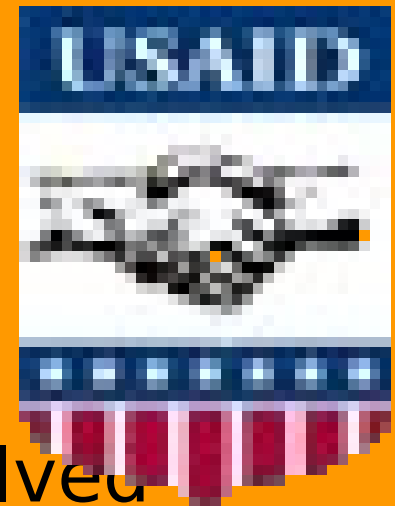
World Food Program

- coordination and delivery of emergency food assistance
 - usually up to two-thirds of the world's requirements each year
 - Helped feed 89 million people in 82 countries last year
 - Focuses on most vulnerable—women, children, elderly



U.S. Agency for International Development

- Coordinates U.S. response to international humanitarian emergencies
- Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)
 - Branch of USAID that gets involved when ambassador or ass't sec. of state declares disaster



EC Humanitarian Organization

- European Community's counterpart to USAID



Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

- Non-profit
- Work in international aid
- Receive some \$\$\$ from private sector
- Some cross borders w/o invitation, may criticize gov'ts
- May help w/longterm rebuilding



MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES

- World's largest independent international medical relief agency
- provides aid to victims of armed conflict, epidemics, natural and man-made disasters



- International group of 11 autonomous Oxfam NGOs focused on eradicating poverty
- Provides food, water and sanitation in humanitarian emergencies

Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere

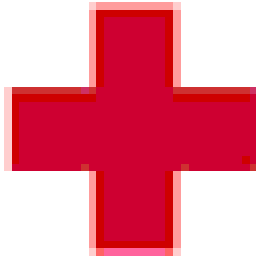


- founded after World War II to enable Americans to help the people of Europe and Asia
- Provides logistics, food aid, and camp management in humanitarian emergencies

Catholic Relief Services

- Provides direct aid to the poor, and tries to involve them in their own development
- Provides trucks or other transportation to deliver food to people
- Provides blankets, cooking utensils, seeds, etc.





**American
Red Cross**

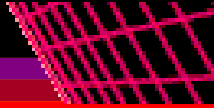
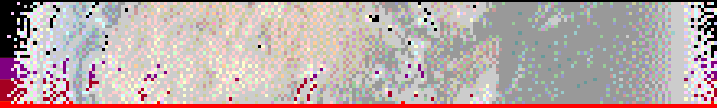
- Network of local organizations provide prompt assistance in emergencies, including food, shelter, and first aid
- national Red Cross coordinates efforts with government, medical, & charity organizations for comprehensive relief



Provides food and other assistance such as blankets, clothing, and seeds, in emergencies

VITA

VOLUNTEERS IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



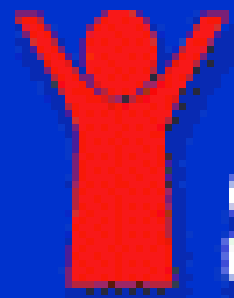
- Provides communications technologies in emergencies:
 - low-earth orbiting satellite
 - a series of independent short-wave packet radio systems,
 - electronic message delivery system that uses existing telephone networks

WORLD RELIEF

...Churches Helping Churches Help the Hurting



Provides assistance through local churches in both natural disasters and complex emergencies



Save the Children.

- Provides emergency relief assistance to children and families
- coordinates with other NGOs
- Focus on education, rehab, and development of infrastructure to improve longterm food supply

International Rescue Committee



Provides relief, protection, and
resettlement services for victims of
complex emergencies



International Committee
of the Red Cross



- Mandated @ Geneva Convention
- Right & duty to cross borders in national & int'l conflicts
- All parties must agree to respect ICRC neutrality & mission for it to participate
- Monitors POW rx; brokers relief

The military & NGOs

- NGOs serve many roles, but often rely on the military and/or the UN and its agencies for:
 - Security
 - transportation to the field or remote sites
 - Communications
 - Sustaining logistical support for their own personnel

Military Assets

- Speed: rapid deployment
- Transportation for land, air, & sea
- Security & Civil Affairs: maintain order
- Logistics: to maintain supply lines
- Command, control & communication: clear chain of command and leadership
- Engineers to rebuild infrastructure

Military Medical Assets

- Deployable Field Hospitals
- Mobile surgical teams
- Rapid evacuation capability
- Preventive medicine teams and field laboratories—for rapid epidemiologic assessments, vector control, field and water sanitation, and disease surveillance

Austere environments

- Limited diagnostic capabilities
- Limited—and different—supplies
 - PCN, AMP, TTC, chloramphenicol
 - Aldomet & hydralazine
- Symptomatic relief low priority
- Triage: expectant category
- Public health of greater note

Cultural issues

- Neglect of female offspring
- Privacy
- Selection of interpreters
- Alternative healing practices
- Market for food and medicine

Summary

- Differences from usual practice:
 - Colleagues and forces
 - Priorities
 - Patient population & level of nutrition
 - Spectrum of disease & illness
 - Available treatments & supplies
 - Empiricism

Conclusions



- The military has an important role in humanitarian missions
- Proper preparation requires familiarization with many facets

